

S H O C H I K U

" YAGIRI KURUWA-BANASHI "

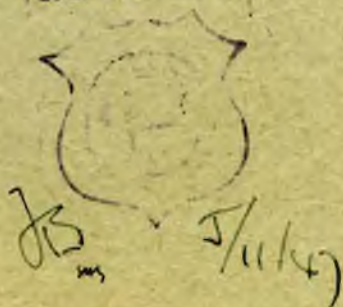
Scene of Kanefuyu's Residence

Kabuki Play in I Act.

To be Presented by Somegoro troupe at Mitsukoshi

Theatre from Nov. 5

C.C.D. J-2040



SYNOPSIS:

Sakata-no-Tokiyuki, a warrior, fell in love with Yaegiri, a prostitute, and married her.

His father, however, was soon assassinated. So he made up his mind to part from his wife and to start on a journey in order to seek for his father's enemy.

One day he happened to meet with his divorced wife at the mansion of Lord Kanefuyu. On knowing that his sister Shiragiku had already revenged his father, Tokiyuki killed himself out of shame.

At the end of his life, he made his wife swallow his entrails, so that his wife became pregnant and gave birth to a baby-boy who, growing into a robust lad, became Kintoki, Japanese David.

CHARACTERS :

Yaegiri, a courtesan

Genshichi, a tobacconist

Ota no Juro

Lady Sawagata, daughter of Lord Kanefuyu

O-Uta)
Shiragiku } waiting maids

(The stage shows Lord Kanefuyu's residence. The right-hand stage shows the mansion. A garden in full bloom on the left.

The curtain rises with the sound of samisen orchestra.)

Nagauta: Lady Sawagata, Lord Kanefuyu's daughter,
Was engaged to Lord Yorimitsu.

The young lord, however, was exiled from court
By General Takafuji's slander.

Days and months have passed
And the lady is living a lonely life
In this mansion

Where only maids and old women
Attend on her.

(The bamboo blind of the chamber rises. The lady's maids are playing karuta (poem cards).)

Maid A: "Concealed love is apt to appear".

B: Here it is.

C: That's the omen for my lady.

D: "Am I to live in silence ---- -"

A: "Never seeing him again?"

Old lady's maid: Girls, you make too much of your own fun.

Old maid B: And such a omen, too.

Shiragiku: My lady, why are you so melancholy?

We make merry only to cheer you up.

Old maid A: Your honorable father will be so much concerned
if you get ill take care of yourself, please.

Lady Sawagata: Don't try to preach me. I won't get merry even
if all the flowers in Japan were gathered in my
garden.

Nagauta: "I was to marry Lord Yorimitsu.
And would have become pregnant by now.
If it were not for General Takafuji".

Sawagata: I can't help crying. Forgive me.

Nagauta: "As the lady weeps over her fate
All the maids weep in sympathy.

Old maid B: Don't girls. You should cheer her up.

Shiragiku: Lord Yorimitsu will come back soon and you will
get married to him.

Old maid A: Where's O-Uta? She's so skilful in cheering up my
lady. (Going to the garden gate) There she comes.
Call her here, girls.

Maids: Hallo, O-Uta. Come here.

Nagauta: "And there comes the funny O-Uta clad in long-
sleeved clothes
Unbecoming to her comical face".

Uta: How glad I am. My mother always says that, as I
am so pretty, I should marry well if I try and
make good use of my looks. I take a bath twice
or thrice a day, powder and wash my face in turn
etc. It's so troublesome to keep oneself pretty.

Well, as I passed beside a barber's shop, many young men cheered me. I thought they praised me, so I walked gracefully.

But it was all in mistake. They said I was very like ----- I, like such an ugly actor Fie.

Maids: Funny O-Uta.

Nagauta: "Just then, Ota-no-Juro,
General Takafuji's henchman,
Comes in without being ushered."

Juro (Loudly at the garden gate.): Is Lord Kanefuyu at home?

This is a messenger from General Takafuji

Uta: It's untimely of him to come now. What shall I
do to send him away?

Old maid: Don't be so rude. His master is a big lord, you
know.

(Coming to the gate.) Well, Esq. Ota, step in, please.

Juro: Oh, hallo. It's not a trouble at all for me to do
anything what my lord likes me to. (Stepping in)
Well, how about Lord Kanefuyu?

Old maid: He is to the Kannon temple at Hase. All the man
vassals have followed her and only women are left
here.

Uta: Will you come again?

Juro: Shut up. It's insecure to leave the mansion in
women's care. I'll take care of the house during
his absence. Well, I've come with a message from
my master to Lady Sawagata.

(Accompanied by samisen orchestra.)

Well, my master, General Takafuji, took fancy to the lady and has often proposed to her through go betweens. He has not yet received any answer and is now impatient. He has sent me here to get a prompt answer.

Shiragiku: Asking for your pardon, I'd like to tell you that my lady has made up her mind to be faithful to her promise with Lord Yorimitsu, though he has been exiled from court.

Juro: It will be unfavorable for this family to make a match with an exile.

Sawagata: As I have once been engaged to Lord Yorimitsu, I won't have any match with anyone else even if I am to be put in prison for that you loathsome messenger of Takafuji, away with you at once.

Nagauta: "As she is so definite
Even the steel-hearted Ota
Is put out of countenance".

Uta: My lady is so strong-hearted. The young sir looks rather stupid, I'm afraid.

Maid: Don't frown so, Esq. Ota. No woman will fall in love with you if you look so morose.

Maids: Do smile, sir.

Juro: You impertinent women. You make a fun of me?

Old maid: Don't be mad with women.

Juro: But -----

Shiragiku: It's unsmart of you.

Juro: I mustn't forget my big duty for such a trifle.
I'll wait till Kanefuyu comes back. Show me
within.

Uta: I won't.

Juro: You impertinent!

Shira: I shall.

Juro: Do, please.

Shira: This way, please.

Nagauta: "So Juro goes into the inner rooms
Mocked and put to shame."

Uta: Such a man. Well, hasn't the bobacconist come
yet?

All: Not yet.

Uta: I wish he'd come soon. It's vexing to be waiting.

Nagauta: "Just when the maids are waiting
There comes Sakata no Tokiyuki
Now disguised as Genshichi the tobacconist.
He once was a prosperous warrior
Frequenting the gay quarters
But now is on a wandering tour
Having divorced his beloved wife
In order to seek for his father's enemy."

Genshichi: Won't you have some good tobacco?

Uta: Here you come. Come in.

All: We've been waiting for you.

Gen: Oh, thank you.

Old maid: My lady has been waiting for you, too.

Will you tell us the origin of tobacco?

Gen: All right. You are a good customer of mine.

Uta: Listen to him.

Gen: Well, the beginning of tobacco dates back to the time of the Chinese emperor Genso who smoked tobacco with his beloved mistress Yokihi.

In Japan, on the other hand, famous prostitutes as Eguchi and Kanzaki used tobacco as a useful means to entice their customers.

Nagauta: "Tobacco smoke is more vain
Than that of Mt. Asama".

Uta: Thank you for your story. You're so eloquent and as handsome as Narihira I'm so desperate for you. Answer me, please.

Nagauta: "And she clings to him fondly."
(Lady Sawagata laughs.)

Maids: Oh, my lady has become merry. She smiles.

Gen: Oh, does she?

Uta: Thanks to you, my Romeo.

Gen: Do I look so handsome?

Uta: You do. You look just like Narihira.

Gen: You look like Ono-noKomachi or Yokihi.

Uta: Do I look so divinely pretty?

Gen: You look demonly horrible.

Uta: What did you say? You -----

Nagauta: "Just as O-Uta speaks furiously

The messenger Juro comes out of the inner rooms."

Juro: I'm now too impatient to wait any longer.

I'll take the lady with me.

Old maid (checking him): What are you going to do?

Juro: I'm just taking her to my master.

Maids: We won't let you -----

Old maid: Until my lord comes back

Juro: I can't be waiting for him for there is no
knowing when he comes back.

(He tries to take Lady Sawagata's hand.

The maids try to check him. Meanwhile O-Uta
pleads Genshichi to send Juro away.)

Gen (Stepping forward): Just a minute, please.

Juro: Don't be too forward, you merchant.

Gen: Won't you have some tobacco?

Juro: It won't do to take tobacco in place of the lady?

Gen: But, it will, sir.

Juro: What?

Gen: My tobacco is made of Chinese "beauty weed" so that if you smoke it, ladies will take fancy to you. Just try if the lady won't like to go with you.

Juro: But I don't like tobacco. Moreover, it must cost dear.

Gen: I'll let you smoke free of charge just as a sample.

Juro: Oh, will you? I'm so fond of smoking.

Gen: Will you have a smoke, then?

Juro: I won't pay, you know.

Gen: It's quite all right.

Juro: I'll smoke free of charge.

Gen (Smoking): The first puff will make you a dandy.

Juro: Oh, will it?

Gen: The second will make your girl smile. The third will make her anxious to see you. The fourth will make her cling to you -----

Juro: Slowly, please.

(Meantime Genshichi gives Juro pipe after pipe. Juro becomes dizzy and squats down.)

Juro: You abominable tobaccoconist. Oh, I feel so dizzy. I'll just go home and come afresh. Oh, so dizzy.

Nagauta: "So he goes off staggering and tottering".

Maids: You're so smart, Genshichi.

Gen: Am I doing well?

Sawagata: I've heard from my maids that you often tell them stories about courtesans and gay quarters. I'd like to listen to samisen.

Gen: I once was well acquainted with such matters, but now, I'm a perfect stranger to them.

Nagauta: "So he tries to escape."

Uta: Play at once, Genshichi.

Gen: But -----.

Uta: Are you going to decline what my lady ask you?

Gen: Oh, no.

Uta: Play at once, then.

Nagauta: "So he takes his samisen
Out of the case
And sings -----"

(The stage revolves. The scene is beside the hedge of Kanefuyu's residence. Yaegiri the courtesan comes along.)

Yaegiri: Whose house is this, I wonder. Oh, the samisen sounds so sweetly. (A pause.)

Yae: Why, it's the song my lover Sakata-no Tokiyuki used to sing with me. I'd like to have a peep at the player.

Nagauta: "So he calls out loudly."

Yae: This is the well-known courtesan scrivenery.
I'll write love letters for maids, courtesans,
mistresses, widows and wives. Can I do anything
for you?

Old maid (behind the stage): What an unusual dealer. Let's
call him in and make him comfort my lady.

Uta: All right ma'am.
(Coming to the garden gate.) Come in, mistress
courtesan scrivenery. My lady wants you.

Yae: Oh, thank you.
(The stage revolves again and shows the former
mansion.)

Old maid: What on earth is a courtesan scrivenery? I wish
~~she'd~~ she'd comfort my lady. Now, Tobacconist,
you'd better ask her to write something.

Nagauta: "Soon there comes Yaegiri
Accompanied by O-Uta."

Uta: Come this way.

Gen: Now, mistress courtesan scrivenery, I'd like you
to write this:-----
(Exchanging looks with Yaegiri.)

Why, you're -----.

Yae: Oh, you're -----

Nagauta: The woman, noticing the man,
Is about to fry at him
And abuse him for having put her to shame
She, however, refrains from doing so
Diffident to the lady and the maids.
(Both Genshichi and Yaegiri look awkward.)

Sawa: You must have got reasons to have become what
you are. Just tell me all about it.

Uta: Tell your personal history. My lady wants you to.

Yae: Oh, thank you. I've been impatient to do so.

Nagauta: "My name is Yaegiri
And I once was a courtesan of high position
Well-known for chivalrous spirit.
Many a man came to see me
And among them there was a warrior
Named Sakata-no-Tokiyuki
He visited me frequently for three years
In the meantime there was a courtesan
Named Odamaki
She took fancy to Tokiyuki
And wrote hundreds of love letters to him.
We two, however, were always as intimate
With each other as ever.
It made Odamaki furious."
"It was on 18 of last August
That she came to me and said:"

Yae: "Now, Yaegiri, just answer me if you will give me your man or not."

Nagauta: "She said it in so furious a way
That I caught hold of her hand and said:"

Yae: "Don't be so unreasonable. Isn't there any man left for you in Japan but my man?"

Nagauta: "'Anyway, I was the first to fall in love with him.
You mean woman,
Are you trying to rob me of my fancy man?'
And I threw her with all my might
She fell down into the garden
And bled much at the nose
All the maids, cooks and clerks of the brothel
Hurried to her aid,
For she was the drawing card of the house.
All the house was upset then
And it was as if an earthquake
Came with a thunder storm.
It really was a scene
Unfolded for the first time
Ever since the beginning of the world".

Yaegiri: The young warrior was at once disowned by his father and I myself had nothing to do but flee from the quarters by night. And we two came to lead a poor life.

Nagauta: "Oh, I'm so thirsty
Having chattered so much.

Old maid: You've had a hard time of it, it seems. But it must be pleasing to live with a man you love.

Yae: Listen to me a little longer. Soon his father was assassinated and he started on a journey leaving me behind. He told me that it was to seek for his father's enemy that he ~~he~~ left me. But it was all untrue.

Nagauta: "It was all a pretext.
And I was fairly taken in."

Yae: He has forsaken me and is living a luxurious life himself, flirting with young girls and playing samisen. I am the most unhappy woman in Japan.

Naga: "So saying,
She bursts into tears."

Uta: It's reasonable of you to lament about it.
I really feel with you.

Maid B: Don't be so impatient.

Yae: Oh, thank you.

Sawa: I've got more things to inquire of you
Come with us, will you?

(Lady Sawagata and her maids go out. Yaegiri and Genshichi are left behind alone with each other.)

Gen: How have you come here?

Yae: I'm to follow her ladyship.

Gen: Wait, my wife.

Yae: I've got nothing to do with my divorced husband.

Gen: What a woman.

(Accompanied by samisen orchestra.)

Gen: What do you hint at? Haven't we parted from each other with mutual understanding in order to revenge my father's unfortunate death? Don't you feel pity for your husband?

Nagauta: "And he looks much mortified.

Yae: How many enemies have you got, may I ask? Is there any other than Mononobe no Hita whom your sister Shiragiku killed on 23 of last month?

Gen (Surprised): What? What did you say? Are you sure of that?

Shiragiku (coming into stage): You're Tokiyuki, my brother.

Gen: How have you come here? And is it real that you have killed Hita?

Shira: Well, I killed him on 23 of last month with the cooperation of Lord Usui. I wished so much to inform you of it, but I couldn't know anything of your whereabouts.

Gen: You've killed him, then?

Shira: Oh, yes.

Yae: Now, Tokiyuki, Lord Yorimitsu has been slandered and exiled from court because he took care of your

sister Miss Shiragiku. Do you say that you don't know such a big scandal?

Shira: So I made up my mind to attend on Lady Sawagata, Lord Yorimitsu's betrothed. It's very offensive of you not to know such a big event, moreover, to have done nothing for your father's revenge. How base of you.

Gen: Is it that Lord Yorimitsu has fallen into difficulties because of our enemy? Though I have been forestalled by my sister in revenging my father, I shall go and subjugate General Masamori and so show my gratitude to Lord Yorimitsu.

Nagauta: "So saying, he is about to rash ~~xxx~~ out."

Yae (checking him): How can you go alone and kill General Takafuji at once? It is not so easy to kill him as to persuade maids and widows to give themselves to you.

Nagauta: "Tokiyuki, so reasoned,
Feels much mortified.
All of a sudden, he unsheathes his sword.
And stabs himself.
His wife, together with his sister,
Triks to check him".

Yae: Why, are you mad?

Shira: What on earth is it for?

Gen: Silence. Your advice just now has done for me what Goshi's admonition did to the Chinese Emperor Go-o. Anyway, I can do nothing to compensate for my past failure. I can't live on with so much shame. In three days after my death, you will feel a pain in your womb. It is my spirit that you conceive. I shall be reborn in this world in the form of a robust baby-boy and ruin General Masamori.

As to yourself, there shall be a big change in you. Resided deep mountains and lonely valleys and take care of my posthumous son. Here are my entrails to take lodging in your womb.

Nagauta: "He gratches
And thrusts it into his wife's moth".

Juro: (appearing into stage) Come on.

Nagauta: "There comes Ota-no-Juro
Followed by his followers."

Juro: Now, Kanefuyu, though General Takafuji proposed to your daughter Sawagata, she has refused him because she has been engaged to Lord Yorimitsu. I have come to take her with me. Answer me at once.

Shiragiku: It's improper of you to take advantage of us because we are all women.

Nagauta: "And she gets ready
To fight with her dagger."

Juro: Attack her, folks.
(A fighting scene. Soon Juro brings lady Sawagata
into stage and is about to take her off, when
Yaegiri, looking as fierce as a demon woman defies
him.)

Yae: Come, Shiragiku, accompany your lady to some safe
place while I fight with him and his followers.

Shira: But -----

Yae: Go at once, I tell you.

Shira: All right.

Nagauta: "Shiragiku, protecting the lady,
Escapes from the jaws of death."

Juro: Dubious woman.

Followers: Out with you.

Yae: I am not a woman now. Though I am a prostitute
by form, my spirit is that of the warrior Sakata-
no-Tokiyuki. I'll go into the Ashigara mountains
and bring up my child with no liberal arts but
with much valour, so that he will make a name for
his father.

Gen: It's admirable of you, wife. Go at once.

Juro: Follow her, folks.
(The curtain falls with the mysterious sound of
drums.)
